

# Unplugged program in Croatia – implementation and process evaluation

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Martina Ferić Šlehan & Valentina Kranželić  
University of Zagreb  
Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences  
Department of Behavior Disorders



## The Unplugged program in Croatian context

The Unplugged program is based on the positively evaluated European Union Drug Abuse Prevention (EUDAP) initiative that has been developed, piloted and positively evaluated in 7 European countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain and Sweden) over the past five years. From 2009. to 2010. program was implemented in 5 new European countries, including the Croatia, within the project Unplugged: European Drug Abuse Prevention (EUDAP): Adaptation, Pilot and Evaluation of a Substance Abuse Prevention and Health Promotion Initiative for 12-14 year olds, The Mentor Foundation (International).

In the Republic of Croatia program is managed by University of Zagreb, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences. Program was implemented in 15 schools in the City of Zagreb and surroundings in the years 2009/2010. Program implementation is supported by Teachers training agency (AZOO) and Government of the Republic of Croatia Office for combating narcotic drug abuse.

The program is based on learning/practicing life skills and on the concept of social influence and:

- promote positive and healthy behaviors
- and affect on substance abuse prevention (smoking, alcohol and other substances).

The program has two components: a component for students and a component for parents.

The component for students consists of 12 units, which are designed to be carried out during school time by teachers who attended a 3-day training course. It targets both experimental and regular use of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs. The curriculum consists of three parts: the first aims to improve knowledge of risks and protective factors, as well as to build attitudes against substance use; the second focuses on interpersonal skills, beliefs, norms and realistic information about prevalence; the third aims to develop intrapersonal skills, such as coping competences, problem solving/decision making and goal setting.

The component for parents consists of 3 parent meetings. The parent meetings topic are:

- 1/ Understanding better the teenagers
- 2/ Parenting a teenager means growing up together
- 3/ A good relationship with my child also means setting up rules and limits

The program includes training/education of teachers and school counselors (in this case social pedagogues). The training/education is carried by team from Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb and with support of National Teachers training agency (AZOO).

The most important project results are:

- (1) translated, adapted and accessible effective substance abuse prevention program
- (2) program was implemented with grate fidelity in 15 schools in the City of Zagreb and surroundings
  - (2.1.) 64 teachers and 14 social pedagogues were trained/educated,
  - (2.2.) over 1550 students were exposed to the program – 66 classes
  - (2.3.) 20%-75% student’s parents were involved with the program (parent meetings)
- (3) the program was added to The Exchange on Drug Demand Reduction Action (EDDRA) database.

## Implementation evaluation

Implementation evaluation (process evaluation) aim was to answer to which level of fidelity program was implemented in schools, or to which extent the integrity of the program was respected.

Unplugged program was implemented during school year 2009./10. in 5 schools (OŠ Žitnjak, Zagreb; OŠ Trnsko, Zagreb; OŠ Prečko, Zagreb; OŠ Luka, Sesvete; OŠ Stenjevec, Zagreb) in the City of Zagreb and surrounding.

In the program were involved:

- 345 six grade students (16 classes),
- 16 teachers,
- 5 social pedagogues.

Implementation process:

- Material translation and trainer education - February 2009.
- Teacher and social pedagogue education/training - August 2009.
- Pilot implementation - September to December, 2009.
- Material adaptation based on experience in pilot implementation - January 2010.
- Booster session – February 2010.
- Program implementation (process and effectiveness evaluation) – February to May 2010.
- Teacher and social pedagogue education/training (2 groups) – August to September 2010.
- Program implementation (process evaluation) – September to December 2010.

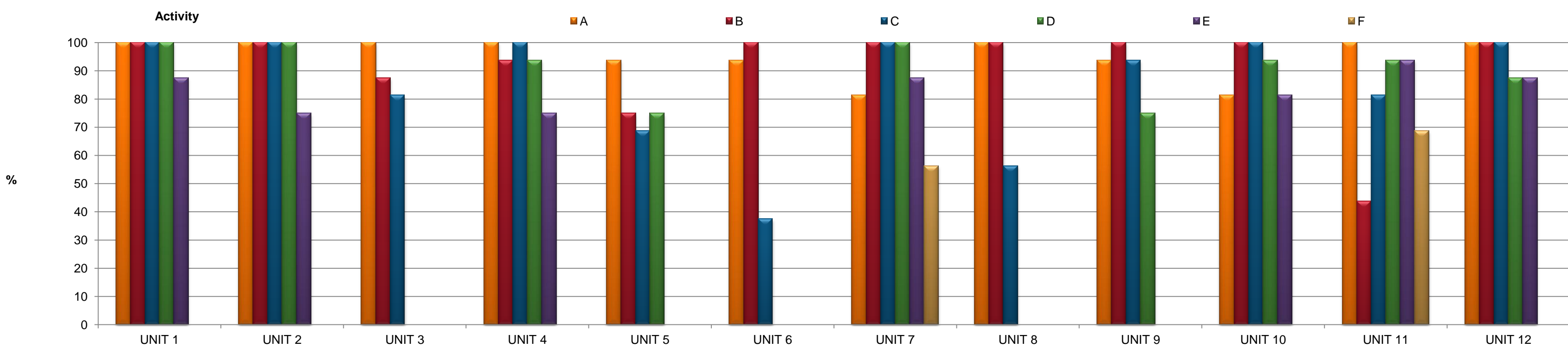
For data collection 5 protocols were used:

1. Protocols for process monitoring of the Basic Program (fulfilled by teachers after each session, 12 protocols)
2. Protocols for the process monitoring of the parents arm (fulfilled by meeting leader after each parents meeting, 3 protocols)
3. Protocols for monitoring other programs in control classes and supplementary information from intervention classes
4. Teachers satisfaction questionnaire
5. Students satisfaction questionnaire

## The results of implementation evaluation

Response rates: Questionnaire for teachers/school counselors – 99,5%; Questionnaire for students – 97,8%.

Monitoring tools used to evaluate the adherence to the Unplugged activities provide information about high adherence to the Unplugged activities – all units are performed in week-by-week schedule as planned. Key activities that are immanent to the Unplugged program (e.g. role-play, discussion, main activity in the unit) are performed in more than 70% classes, and most of all Unplugged activities are performed in 100% of involved classes.



Activity code	UNIT 1	UNIT 2	UNIT 3	UNIT 4	UNIT 5	UNIT 6	UNIT 7	UNIT 8	UNIT 9	UNIT 10	UNIT 11	UNIT 12
A	OPENING UNPLUGGED	OPENING	OPENING	OPENING	OPENING	OPENING	OPENING	OPENING	OPENING	OPENING	OPENING	OPENING
%	100	100	100	100	93,8	93,8	81,3	100	93,8	81,3	100	100
B	BRAINSTORM	ROLE PLAY 1	COLLAGE	HOW MANY TIMES	ARGUMENTS ON CIGARETTES	EMOTION EXPRESSION	DISCUSSION	ROLE PLAY	DRUG QUESTION	COPING	ADVENTURE	PERSONAL GOAL
%	100	100	87,5	93,8	75	100	100	100	100	100	43,8	100
C	WORK IN SMALL GROUP	ROLE PLAY 2	A CHARACTER	ESTIMATED FIGURES	THE COURT	TELEPHONE BOOK	AM I ASSERTIVE	COMPLIMENTS	SCORES	COPING DIFFICULTIES	FAMILY PROBLEM	SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES
%	100	100	81,3	100	68,6	37,5	100	56,3	93,8	100	81,3	100
D	CLASS CONTRACT	SITUATION PLAYS		ACTUAL FIGURES	CLOSURE		REFUSAL STATEMENTS		FEELINGS	STORY OF JACOB	PROBLEM SOLVING	REPORT IN CLASS
%	100	100		93,8	75		100		75	93,8	93,8	87,5
E	PERSONAL REFLECTION	STUDENT WORKBOOK		CRITICAL THINKING			INDIVIDUAL PROCESSING			CLOSURE	GROUP WORK	INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION
%	87,5	75		75			87,5			81,3	93,8	87,5
F							TASKS				TASKS	
%							56,3				68,8	

Qualitative data shows that some activities, that are performed in less than 100% of classes, are performed in slightly different way which was created in regards to the conditions and user needs. In those cases, the goal of unit was achieved despite of minor changes in methods used for delivery of some activities.

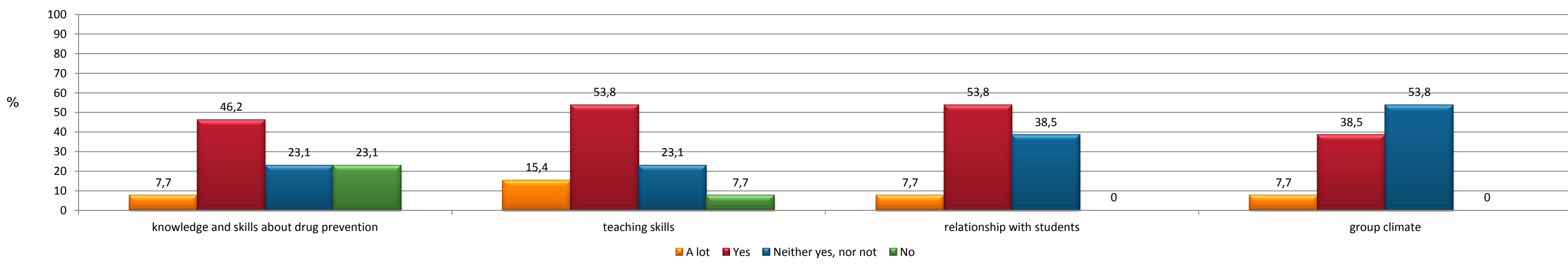
High fidelity in implementation of the Unplugged program in Croatia is achieved and it is known that high implementation fidelity leads to the higher effectiveness of implemented intervention (Barry, 2004; Chen, 1998).

Parents meetings are performed in every class involved and average duration of parents meeting was 110 minutes. Response rate vary from 25% to 75% by parents meeting (100% of response in one class would be equal to the number of students in that same class).

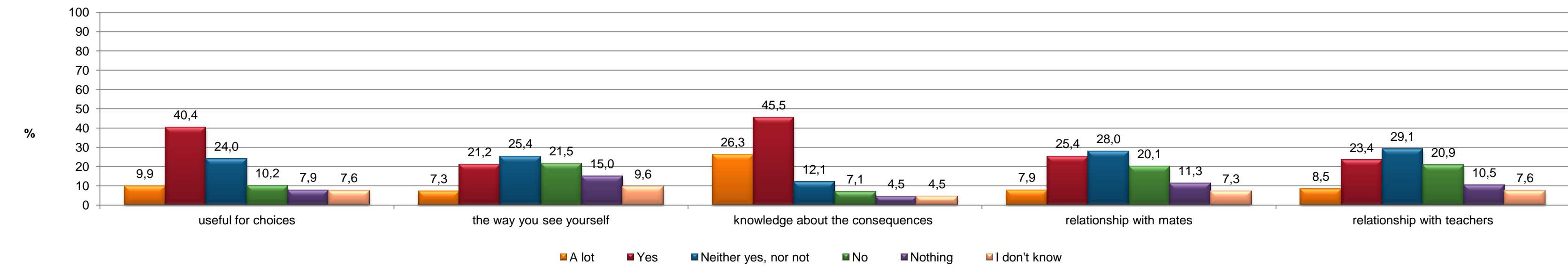
Very satisfied and satisfied with program were 92,3% teachers. Almost every teacher perceived useful and very useful teachers training, supervision and handbook for teachers.

Moreover, 53,9% teachers have opinion that program enhanced their knowledge and skills in the field of drug abuse prevention, and 69,2% teachers perceived that teachers training, implementation of the program and supervision contribute to their teaching skills. Better relations with students during and after program implementation perceived 61,5% teachers.

In next graph there are results of Questionnaire for teachers in the form of perceived effects regarding the Unplugged program implementation.



Satisfied and very satisfied with program were 51,1% students. In graph there are results of Questionnaire for students regarding the effects of Unplugged program.



## Conclusion

motivated teachers and school counsellors

commitment to prevention

and teachers training

implementation fidelity

usefulness and valuability for teachers, students and their relations

sense of competence and effectiveness



sustainability